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Imam Sujoko



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### Gender Relation in *Willow Trees Don't Weep* Novel (2014) by Fadia Faqir: A Feminist Literary Criticism

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#### **Abstract**

*This study is aimed at finding gender relations between male and female character as they are depicted in Willow Trees Don't Weep (2014) novel written by Fadia Faqir. This study employs descriptive qualitative method on feminist literary criticism as a theory to find and reveal gender issues. The text is analyzed by using feminist criticism "woman as reader" to give the evaluation and interpretation on how woman writes about woman. The result shows that there are three significant points in which gender relation in patriarchal culture is portrayed in the novel. They are male domination, discrimination towards women, and violence against women. The results were evaluated by examining female character's condition in a patriarchal society through woman's point of view based on her social life and experiences. Moreover, the country where women live is influenced the gender relation. Jordan in this case, has the strongest patriarchal system compared to Pakistan, Afghanistan, and London (the countries where Najwa lived while searching for her father).*

**Keywords:** Feminist Literary Criticism, Gender Relation, Patriarchal Culture.

#### **A. Introduction**

Gender is a group of rules, tradition, and social and culture relation that categorize human being as feminine or masculine (Sofia, 2009). The feminine and masculine such a strong attribute attached to woman and men. The femininity, for instance is given effect on women's life in the society that put them as inferior and being subordinated (Sofia, 2009 in de Beauvoir 1998). As a social construc-

tion, gender leads to a crucial discussion on the position of women and men in the society including the gender relation.

Gender relation discusses role of men and women in a society. It becomes a phenomenon since patriarchal system dominated a culture. In a patriarchal society, gender relation is based on law of father (Wiyatmi, 2012). Moreover, Hisham Sharabi stated that family patriarchy provides





the ground of dual domination of father over the family household and of male over female (Moghadam, 2007).

Furthermore, male domination in patriarchal culture is not only happen in real life but also in literary work, especially in novel. Therefore, feminist literary criticism can help to establish gender issue represented in literature (Goodman, 2010).

Feminist literary criticism is a critical that investigates how women are being represented and how the text manifested through gender relation and social difference (Ruthven, 2001). In addition, it leads to identify women's role inside literary works in order to uncover patriarchal system that dominates women.

Nowadays, many authors of literary work have put heroine in their works to express their ideas such as Fadia Faqir; an Arab British author and she is known as a feminist literary author since her works often focused on gender issues, identity and culture. Black (2011) reported that, as a Jordanian, she is the foremost spokesperson for Arabian woman who shares her experiences in Arabic culture which is largely of patriarchal cultural landscape. Moreover, she has published several novels including: *Nisanit* (1988), *Pillars of Salt* (1996), *My Name is Salma* (2007) and *Willow Trees Don't Weep* (2014).

In her fourth novel, Faqir explores of what happened to the women who lived in an Islamic country that remains to follow patriarchal system as their culture without a male figure in their house. Faqir tells that since Omar as the main male character in this novel left his wife named Raneen and his daughter named Najwa then their lives become worst. Such as in term of religion, they changed it from Moslem to be secular or not religious.

This situation makes them lose their

role in their society and become different with others as the result of an absence of male figure in their lives. In addition, Faqir also shows that after Najwa mother's death, Najwa is unable to live alone in the house without male guardian since patriarchal system applied in this community. So that, it makes her to think that her presence is going to be rejected and humiliated by the society without her father figure around her.

Furthermore, this situation makes no other choice for Najwa because this community would not understand about her condition. As a result, she must go looking for her father. Moreover, her effort on finding her father is not easy because she must leave her country that is Jordan to Pakistan then goes to Afghanistan and the last journey is to London. Najwa's condition to resist male domination in a patriarchal society that puts woman as inferior being, makes her pursuing her past in every way to find her place and right in that community.

The research of *Willow Trees Don't Weep* novel had been conducted by Rosida and Molalita (2016) entitled the *Identity Construction of Jordanian Muslim Women Reflected In Willow Trees Don't Weep Novel* (2014) by Fadia Faqir. Both Rosida and Molalita focused their analysis on the identity construction of Najwa as a Jordanian Muslim woman who lived in patriarchal culture without father figure in the family. The result of their research shows that articulation and negotiation are the two major things in Najwa self identity construction (Rosida & Molalita, 2016).

On the other hand, it is important to investigate the gender relation of this novel as it has strong issue about feminism. The relation between male and female characters as portrayed in the novel leads to the domination of male figure. In this case, women seem to be the inferior and have no power to fight for their rights. In patriarchal culture particularly, women are subordinated as a result of social construction.

This study aims to analyze gender relation in this novel and employs feminist literary criticism as the theory in which it is used to reveal a lot of subordinations experienced by female characters. By this approach, this study will examine the data by giving an interpretation that associated to gender issues such as description of the female characters in their relationship with male characters and situation when their lives were under male domination in the novel.

Based on the limitation of the problem above, this study concentrates by formulating the research question as follow:

How is gender relation portrayed in *Willow Trees Don't Weep* by Fadia Faqir through feminist literary criticism?

## B. Methods

The method used in this study is descriptive qualitative by applying the feminist literary criticism that focus on revealing gender relation portrayed in the novel. The text is analyzed by using feminist criticism "woman as reader" to give the evaluation on how woman writes about woman. Stanley and Duroche (as quoted by Semi, 2013) stated that there are three views of literary criticism; evaluation, interpretation, and evaluation and interpretation. It can be said that literary criticism is an effort of the reader to evaluate the essential meaning of literary work by giving the evaluation and interpretation of the literary work. In this study, we focus on the investigation of the relation between women and men in patriarchal culture, images of woman and stereotype of women portrayed by the author (Faqir, 2014) in the novel *Willow Trees Don't Weep*. This study used both evaluation and interpretation of female and male relation (gender relation) as portrayed in the novel.

## C. Results and Discussions

Gender is the structure of social relation that centers on reproductive arena, and the set of practices that bring reproductive

distinctions between bodies into social processes (Connell, 2009). In addition, it is a consistent predictor of attitudes that support use of violence against women. It differences in definitions and perceptions of violence are evident too with regard to particular forms of violence against women, such as sexual harassment, date rape and wife assault (Pease, 2009).

Meanwhile, according to Umar, relationship means having relation and bond to other person (Umar, 2001). So that, gender relation refers to complex, culturally and historically specific social system that organize and regulate interactions between women and men, as well as their relative social value. (Cook, 2007).

Moreover, Glick (2008) said that gender relation is not immune to discrimination and oppression, but that they encompass and reconcile dominance with intimate interdependence. Most men maintain subjectively positive attitudes toward men, seek intimacy with them, and idealize their "feminine" qualities. At the same time, women are generally accorded lower status, discriminated against in ways that foster continuing inequality, and often treated with hostility when they stray from traditional roles.

The other concept that is used in this study is feminist literary criticism. According to Humm (2013), feminist criticism is used to share basic assumption that gender is constructed through language and is visible in writing style; and style, therefore must represent the articulation of ideologies of gender. But, the definition of ideology contains the nation of contradiction. It because of what we construct to explain to ourselves our experience and experience of others. Certainly, the ideologies of women are likely to encompass more contradictions than the ideologies of men since women are provided with many more confusing images of themselves than men.

Moreover, feminist criticism is concerned with the impact of gender critique on writing and reading that usually begins with a patriarchal culture (Kharbe, 2009). It has three distinct subdivisions, first is the analysis of the “image of women”, second is the examination of existing criticism of female authors and the third is a “perspective” criticism that attempts to set standard for literature that is “good” from a feminist viewpoint (Donovan, 2015).

The last concept that is used in this study is patriarchal culture. Although all Arabs are not Muslim and all Muslims are not Arab, perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes about these groups are overlapping (Vassilis Saroglou, Bahija Lamkaddem, Matthieu Van Pachterbeke, 2008). Moreover, patriarchal culture is the main cause of women’s oppression. It because a lot of people justified that men hold highest position and have more authority over the women and they also consider that women are the second class. (Rueda, 2007),

This study classifies gender relations into three categories as it is reflected in the novel of *Willow Trees Don’t Weep*. The first is a male domination, the second is discrimination towards woman and the last category is violence against woman. Moreover, gender relations in this novel happen in some countries including Jordan, Pakistan, Afghanistan and London.

This study finds that male character who dominates Najwa and Raneen’s lives is Omar Rahman. Faqir tells that Najwa and her mother had endured all consequences of an absent male figure in patriarchal society. Since Najwa was three years old, she and her mother are abandoned by Omar. He never come back home without worrying about the consequences that will happen to his family. As the author told in the novel as follows:

My father, Omar Rahman, who walked out on us when I was three, loomed large in the past, a featureless dark shadow, without eyes, lips, or voice. I remembered very little: his strong,

bushy hair, a scar at the end of his left eyebrow, the warmth of his bony fingers clasp my ribcage before flinging me up in the air. [...]

He left us and never looked back. No cards or recorded messages, like the ones you hear on the Greetings For you radio programme.” “Why would I go search for him? He should look for me, his daughter. (Faqir, 2014)

From the text above, it indicates that Omar’s departure is the beginning of the problems. This study finds that Omar does not carry out his responsibility as a head of household well. Since he abandoned his family in 1986, he never meet or even contact his family. In this case, Faqir explores about how Jordanian women’s lives in Islamic country that remains to follow patriarchal system which seek to organize (re-organize) practices of social life including the minute details of family life through the implementation of what they deem as ‘truly Islamic’ or ‘authentic Islamic values’. The targets are first and foremost women – women’s rights and status in the family and society and woman’s body (Othman, 2006).

In her novel, Faqir tells that after Najwa’s mother death, her grandmother said that Najwa is unable to live in the city of Amman alone without male guardian. Moreover, she belongs to her father because her condition is vulnerable so only her father who can help her to discover her place in her society. If she ended up on her own in the house alone, then it will be so shameful. As the author told in the novel as follows:

Grandmother: “Now your mother is dead, you have to go and look for her father. Because, don’t have long to live and you’ll end up alone in this house.”

Najwa: “Don’t say that Grandma! And I have a job and can survive.”

Grandmother: “You know how it is Amman and particularly in this neighborhood. Chaste woman don’t live on their own. Tongues will lag. You’ll be ostracized, habibti (for noble women). And you have no relatives.” As they say, “Better a man’s

shadow than that of a wall.” (Faqr, 2014)

From the text above, it shows that Najwa is depicted as an independent woman by Faqr since Najwa believes that she can face all of the consequence alone without father figure. However, Amman is a region with adhering patriarchal system which considers that men are an important figure to protect women and they are stronger than anything even with a big wall house in the house. Consequently, it creates various problems to an inequality gender relation which is mostly happen to women in social and cultural life.

According to Moghadam (2003), the Middle Eastern Muslim family has been long described as a patriarchal unit that Muslim family laws have served to reinforce patriarchal gender relations and women’s subordinate position within family. Moreover, Muslim women in most contemporary Muslim societies face many challenges and dilemmas especially with the rise Islamic conservatism (Othman, 2006).

In her novel, Faqr tells that during Omar’s departure, Najwa and Raneen’s lives became worst. Najwa’s mother really hated Islam and she raised her daughter up with secular lifestyle. The reason why she hated Islam is because of her husband’s deed who prefers to go to Afghanistan for jihad with his friend than stay in the city of Amman with his family. As a consequence, it makes Najwa and Raneen lose their roles. Until Raneen raised her daughter up from religious to be secular (not religious). And she became different with other children in this community. As the author told in the novel as follows:

When he left twenty - four years ago, my mother changed. She took off her veil, cut her veil, packed her father’s clothes, Qur’ans, books, prayer beads, aftershave, comb and tweezers in a suitcase, hurled it in the loft and forbade me from mentioning him [...]

She cried over him for months, but she would

wake up in the morning dry - eyed, put on her suit and trudge to school. [...]

“Teaching the children, with their ready laughter, help somehow,” she said. But that was she started taking tranquillizers. She would pop a pink pill into her mouth then fiddle with the towel until she calmed down. (Faqr, 2014)

From the text above, it implies that there is an impact of being abandoned by husband experienced by Raneen. In this case, Faqr explores of what happened to a woman when her husband left his wife without his responsibility over his family. Male figure’s absent in patriarchal society makes women’s conditions of life become worst since there is no leader who can lead them into the right way of life. In addition, the organization of Muslimat Hidayatullah stated that male are female leaders. Because Allah has overwhelmed male over female, therefore, the position between male and female in Islam is unequal (Martiany, 2012).

In this novel, Faqr tells that beside patriarchal culture as the factor that affects gender relation, social environment is another factor of women’s oppression in society. It can be seen that Najwa is considered as humiliated person by this society since she lived without father figure. Her presence is underestimated and ignored by her environment. As the author told in the novel as follows:

Being the daughter of an absent father, they saw me as common land, without fence or borders. (Faqr, 2014)

From the text above, Faqr opens personal identity of a woman who lives without protection, guardian and supporter. Just because she has no father in her life then she is dissociated from the local community. Faqr also explains the reader that relationship between women and men in this society is formed by ideology of patriarchal culture that cause women could not escape from men’s shadow.

In order to get her rights in her



environment, eventually, she considered carefully and decided to find her father. This situation will endanger and threaten her condition who lived without male figure. Moreover, although her father was irresponsible over his family but Najwa had no other choice except she must find him. As the author told in the novel as follows:

I had no option but to find my father. If my grandmother died, I would live alone in that house, something this city would not tolerate. Only women of ill repute live on their own without a male guardian. I would be pursued by predators, ostracized and my door would be marked. If I'd had no choice, I would have let him go, for he was nothing to me, not even a memory. Who could help me in this big city? The world was a maze and I didn't know where to enter it. (Faqir, 2014)

From the text above, it shows that Najwa's condition in this neighborhood is vicious. In addition, there is an unwanted act must be done by Najwa that is go looking for her father in unknown places. It can be seen that there is a rebellious act of Najwa since she does not want to be marginalized by this society anymore. Moreover, patriarchal system that applied in this community threatens her condition.

As a woman who ever lived in the country of Jordan, Faqir explores how Jordanian women's lives based on her own experiences. Their lives as incomparably bound by the unbreakable chains of religious and patriarchal oppressions' (Mahmood, 2005). Faqir's depiction of everything that happened in patriarchal society is the results of her observation.

In her novel, she also tells that Raneen's condition is not good because she is aggrieved and dumped by her husband, Omar. Since Omar left his her for jihad, she became depressed and spent most of her life uptight and sick by consuming drugs. Until she passed away caused by Cancer that totally destroyed her organs. As the author told in the novel as follows:

My mother spent most of her life uptight, drugged and sick. She was angry with my father for leaving us just like that without a second glance. Nothing for her. No letters, photographs or voice messages from him, like the ones received by other families of absent fighters. And that resentment consumed her totally and destroyed her organs. Cancer. (Faqir, 2014)

From the text above, it shows that there is Raneen's disappointment feelings to Omar. After he abandoned her, she has tried to survive and face all of her various problems from the strength of patriarchal culture with some dangerous or harmful way by using drugs that hurting herself as an expression of her anger that she is neglected and feeling unappreciated by her husband. Moreover, the recent studies in Arab societies stated that wife abuse is high and has devastating effects on the abused wives' health and psychological well-being, as well as on their marital relations (Haj-Yahia, 2002).

Unequal relationship between Najwa and Omar also can be seen by Faqir's novel through some text that shown Najwa blamed her father as the main cause her presence is ignored by community, her mother's death and the reason she has to leave her grandmother alone in the house and go to another country alone only to find him. As the author told in the novel as follows:

I was gripped by anger with this father who was supposed to protect me, provide for me, make sure that I was warm and well fed, but brought me nothing but grief. His departure had eaten at my mother slowly until she developed cancer and died, putting an extra burden on my grandmother's shoulders so that instead of enjoying her old age, she had take care of us and the house, and it had deprived me of any chance of happiness. I could have been married to our neighbor's son by now, but his father wouldn't hear of it. Omar Rahman alone was the culprit. I'd left my country looking for him, found his alternative family, the one he cherished, and here I was alone in this big city on a forged visa. The money was also running out. (Faqir, 2014)

From the text above, it implies that Najwa is depicted as a courageous person since she go to another country alone without any leads which is not many women having a courage like her. The quotation above also shows the situation of Jordanian woman when her life was under patriarchal culture domination. This condition makes her to face all consequences of men's deed by herself which is very apprehensive. Moreover, her movement also becomes limited that she cannot escape from men's shadow.

Furthermore, gender relation in this novel is not only shows woman as subordinate or women's lives are under male domination. However, this study also finds that relationship between Najwa with Zakir and Ashraf shows an equality because these men respect and appreciate her. It can be seen by Faqir that Najwa does not get any discrimination or bad treatment by Zakir and Ashraf but they are equally appreciate each other.

In this case, it indicates that in literary work, women are not always portrayed as having bad relationship to men. Since this study discovers that there is no problem in her relationship with these men as they have good relationship, no dominating acts, violence or harassment as usually she got in the city of Amman. However, they can be friends. Although those men already know Najwa's identity as a daughter of missing father.

It can be concluded that in every country of this world, they have different culture and teachings. So that, they have different way in treating women. An equal relationship between Najwa with Zakir is can be seen when she met him who works as a hotel maid in Pakistan. As the author told in the novel as follows:

I stood up, leant on him and we walked to the breakfast room together. [...] Suddenly I was aware of his arm, hairy and warm, against mine. The pedlar had cautioned me against looking men in the eye. "Always cast down

your glance! Men are easily encouraged." My gaze went against her advice. [...]

Najwa: "Zakir, I am looking for my father."

Zakir: "A beautiful girl like you with no father! Gosh almighty!"

Najwa: "Yes. And he's somewhere in Afghanistan."

Zakir: "Much more complicated that I thought."

Najwa: "Will you help me?"

Zakir: "I'll try."

I spent the next hour drinking tea, munching pistachio, almond and cashew nut biscuits and chatting with Zakir. He grimaced, frowned, smiled and squinted. When I finally excused my self, Zakir looked ruffled. I smiled.

Najwa: "Good night, Zakir."

Zakir: "Good night, madam." He stood up and pressed his arms against his body as if standing at attention. [...]

Zakir: "I enjoyed talking to you yesterday." He placed his hand over mine.

Najwa: "Me too. I never speak openly to anyone. It must be this place - how alive and fragrant it is." I pulled my hand away. (Faqir, 2014)

From the quotation above, it can be seen that although Pakistan is an Islamic country which is mostly applies patriarchal system. However, when Najwa came to this country she has good treatment from man in this country and they are respect each other.

Even though at the first time Najwa met Zakir she was afraid to directly interact or face to face with him. It because of her bad experiences in the city of Amman which she never be appreciated by men.

However, her fears did not happen in this country because she got good treatments from Zakir. It shows that encounter of Najwa and Zakir does not create the bad things unlike she usually met in the city of Amman. Although Zakir knows that Najwa went to this country alone without male

figure but he does not humiliate or degrade her. It can be seen when Najwa asked him for help to find her father then he said that he will try to help her. Moreover, Najwa also said that she felt comfortable and enjoyable to chitchat with him and that was the first time for her to speak with strange man.

An equal relationship in this novel also can be seen by Faqir between Najwa with a British man who ever lived in England but he already moved to Afghanistan named Ashraf. She met him when she trapped in a terrorist organization in Afghanistan. He also informed her about Omar during he was there and told her about now him whereabouts. As the author told in the novel as follows:

Najwa: "Where is my father?" My voice quivered.

Ashraf: "Your father, Sheikh Omar Rahman, joined the resistance in 1986 and travelled to Afghanistan in 1987. He worked as a medic in Mazar, not far from here. Seven years after he'd arrived here. He got married."

Najwa: "Please Ashraf I need to see him. Can I see him?" For the first time in my life I begged. [...]

Ashraf: "I am afraid you cannot."

Najwa: "Where is he?"

Ashraf: "He joined global jihad and travelled west." I howled.

Ashraf stepped back, then forward, held my arms and shook me, his eyes blazing. I try to free myself. He gathered up my hair, tilted my head back and kissed me. Grief-stricken, I didn't feel his skin against mine. I resisted, twisting and turning. (Faqir, 2014)

From the text above, it can be concluded that in another country like Afghanistan, Najwa can be friends with strange man there. It differs with her condition that she experienced in Jordan where she always be demeaned by men.

It shows that Najwa and Ashraf have harmonious relationship because he does not do any harm action towards her. However, Ashraf wants to help her to find her father by giving some information related to her father.

Furthermore, female characters' relationship with male characters in this novel is different from place to another place. Moreover, Najwa's condition as a daughter of a missing father when she was in Jordan makes her life becomes horrible since she never be appreciated by men in her society. Moreover, in another country such as Pakistan and Afghanistan Najwa gets respect and appreciate from Zakir and Ashraf and her identity as a daughter of an absent father was never be questioned by them.

Moreover, According to Mansour (2008), "Every traits that usually attached to specific gender can be exchanged, it was the result of social construction and not a God's will." Gender construction happens depend on the context and culture in the area of community. It mostly occurs in the country with adhering patriarchal system which male has absolutely legal to control female's life. Consequently, this society considers that men have more dominant position than women and raises of inequality gender relation which women always be in subordinated position.

In her novel, Faqir also represents that without male figure in her life, Najwa is degraded by her neighbor's father just because she lived in the house alone. In addition, Faqir also shows the reader that in this community women do not have right as men. In addition, Najwa is unable to access public facility such as using internet which this community considers that it is a place only for men so that women cannot go there. Moreover, Najwa's movement in this society becomes limited whereas she must have male permission to do or get everything as she wants like in term of

getting passport. As a result, it makes her to break the rules of this society since she must find some information related to her father whereabouts and have a passport to go trip in another country.

This novel tells that Najwa is discriminated by the society as a consequence of an absent father. In this novel, Faqir tells that when Najwa started to make a love affair with her neighbor's son but before it actually happens, she got rejection from his father. Her dream to marry with that man never be come true since his family has married him off to a daughter of Syrian merchant. Moreover, his father said to her other neighbor that "Najwa is not marriage material" because she is a daughter of a missing father and brought up in house without men. So that, he considered that she will not know how to show his son respect and tend him. He also said that her house is joyless as a result of an absent male figure in it. As the author told in the novel as follows:

Our religious neighbor told my grandmother the whole story. His family married him off to the daughter of a Syrian merchant. "Najwa is not marriage material," his father said. [...] Also, brought up in a house without men. She would not know how to show my son respect and tend him. Their joyless house with three shrivelling women rattling about in it". My heart fell, banged against the tiles and broke into pieces like a demitasse. I sat with my mother under the lemon tree. "Why did he abandon us, leaves us like this, fending for ourselves". (Faqir, 2014)

From the text above, it can be seen that Najwa's condition is threatened in this society. Moreover, it implies that without male figure, her presence is ignored by the society. She is rejected and neglected just because of a missing father, with little honor and decorum then she got fewer opportunity to get everything she wants. A woman's nature and her qualities in a patriarchal society is determined by men. It because of patriarchal system gives more privilege to men. It does not accommodate of gender

equality in this culture, as a result of women always being oppressed. In addition, patriarchal culture is based on men's rule so that it affects to the relationship of women and men that is usually shows a relationship of subordination.

In this case, discrimination towards woman is clearly demonstrated by Faqir in the novel. She shows us that men should be treated well by women, while women have task is to serve them well. Women are the options to men whereas men who choose among them. In this case, it is clearly seen by Faqir that in patriarchal society men as the subject whereas women are the object of men.

In the novel, Faqir tells the reader that Najwa is discriminated by men in the society in term of getting public facility. It can be seen by Faqir when Najwa tried to find her father by go looking for some information related to her father. She breaks the rules of the society to visit the internet cafe since women cannot go there. However, in order to find some information related to her father then she will do anything until she has been chased away in front of men there. As the author told in the novel as follows:

I went to the local internet café, a space out of bounds for chaste women. Only men went there, to sit in front of the computer screens, cracking roasted watermelon seeds, smoking bubbly bubbly and searching for sites of ill repute. If I walked in, they would think that I was looking for chance encounters. Breaking the rules of community was easy. One of foot after another and I was right in the middle of that cloud of smoke and nicotine. I asked for two dinar pass and sat down. [...] The cyber café attendant said, "Now the system has truly crashed. Certain words make the censor jittery. OK shabab! You can go home now. The server is down." Suddenly all the men turned and ogled me. I buttoned up my mother's jacket and walked out, tainted and with little information on Mazar e-Sharif. (Faqir, 2014)

From the text above, Faqir explains clearly the different of right between women



and men in a patriarchal society since this study discovers that female presence in this community is considered as the second class. Faqir also informs that Najwa always meet resistance derived by men in this society.

In addition, interpersonal discrimination may be described or required by verbal, nonverbal, or even paraverbal work. It may include decreased eye contact, shortened interactions, decreased smiles, and roughness (Michelle R. Hebl, *et al.* 2002). It can be seen by Faqir that in this community, women are effeminate to escape from men's shadows as a result of patriarchal culture's thought which men are placed in higher position than women.

Although Najwa had courage to break the rule of the society, but she still got renunciation and forcibly expelled by men. As stated by Cinnirella (2010), negative consequences of breaking the gender role have been shown to apply to both men and women for example when women break the tradition by stepping into men's areas. In this case, Najwa's presence is unappreciated by men and she is unable to get same right as men and her presence is oppressed by men in her society.

In addition, her efforts in order to meet her father leads her to break another rules of this society in term of getting passport. In the city of Amman, it is difficult to get passport especially for women, since this region requires male permission as a requirement to get the passport. If their status are unmarried so that they must have their father's permission. But, if they are married then they must have their husband's permission.

Moreover, Faqir tells that Najwa is reckless to go to the Identity and Passport Service alone because not many women come there on their own to get their passport. Furthermore, she deceives the officer when he asked her about her purpose and reason

why she makes passport. She hides her main purpose that is travel to Pakistan in order to find her father because if she told him the truth then it will be a trouble. As the author told in the novel as follows:

In the morning, I kissed my grandmother's hand and took a taxi to the Identity and Passport Service in the west side. The man by the gate asked, "Why are you here alone?" "I have no male relatives." He sized me up. "I don't believe you. Did you grow out of a tree?" "My father is away and my mother is dead and my grandmother is too old to leave the house. Are you married? If you are I need your husband's permission. "No I'm not married." I wrung my hands. Go over there and write a statement pledging that you are single! Don't forget the stamps." "Not many women come here own like that to get their passport issued." My grandmother had told me to keep quiet about my father. "If they find out that you intend to travel to Pakistan, You'll be in trouble." (Faqir, 2014)

From the conversation between Najwa and the officer above, it shows that in patriarchal society, men and women's right are different whereas women's rights are more limited than men. In this case, it implies to the women like in term of getting public facility, they cannot obtain and use the facility which it can be used by all people. It can be concluded that men are more appreciated and respected class meanwhile women do not have an important position in this society or even in their family. Accordingly, women's needs, rights and interests always after men's rights fulfilled.

Moreover, different of gender role and right become problems when it occurs gender inequality. Whereas, men are placed in a better position and profitable than women. Therefore, it results various forms of injustice and oppression to the women who are vulnerable as a victim. Moreover, it makes lack of the opportunity for women to get their rights. Reality of social cultural presented in this novel is clearly shows about inequality of gender relation which

is discriminate women.

Besides gender construction that put women in subordinate position, Faqir's novel also shows that patriarchal culture's domination embodied Najwa in arbitrarily act and sexual abuse derived by men in society. Kinds of violence experienced by Najwa are physical through sexual harassment and non-physical including verbal violence perpetrated by painful words and psychological violence through Andy's gesture that shows his rejection to her.

As a daughter of an absent father, Najwa always get sexual harassment from men in Jordan. It happens when Najwa was heading to town alone, there is a strange man around her who touched her bum. However, she kept silently because if she shouted, people around her would find out the violation and all the shame would be hers. As the author told in the novel as follows:

Someone touched my bum and I leapt forward silently. If I resisted or shouted, people would find out about the violation and all the shame would be mine. I bit my tongue, something I am used to doing. (Faqir, 2014)

From the text above, it can be seen that patriarchal society considers that a woman who went out house alone without male guardian around her then she is easily becomes a victim of violence. This situation can invite into a trouble as Faqir told in the novel that Najwa has physical contact in her private part derived by a strange man. However, she does not ask for help from others since this community thought that a woman who experienced a sexual harassment is usually a woman who has negative attitudes. Therefore, Najwa is decided to keep quiet of what happened to her from others' sight.

According to Richard J. Harris *et al.* (2005), women are less likely to report violence and abuse that they experienced if

they set out traditional gender-role attitudes in their lives. Moreover, one of the reasons why they do not report the incidents they meet the legal definition of sexual attack is the subjects do not perform stereotypes of real rape. They also were not use a weapon, and involve injuries (Pease, 2009).

It can be concluded that this community considers that gender relation in a patriarchal society is unequal since woman always being oppressed by this community. In addition, beside social constructions, violence acts experienced by Najwa is also caused by patriarchal culture's idea that presumes a loose woman who does not have a male figure then she will never be appreciated by men in her society.

Furthermore, negative labelling or women's stereotypes in this culture assume that women are placed in disadvantaged position. It is seen in Faqir's novel that Najwa cannot do anything since she does not have the courage to fight against the men who abused her. If people know that she is abused by men then this community will more underestimate her. In this case, it implies that negative labelling is a result of social construction which debases to tend women. In addition, every place has different cultural system so gender relations can change from one place to another place.

In this novel, Faqir also tells that in the city of Amman, a woman who went out of the house alone then she will be abused by men because this society considers that she belongs to everyone. It actually happens to Najwa when she went out of house alone, there was a strange man who stopped his car next to her then he teased her and thought that she was a whore. As the author told in the novel as follows:

A man stopped his car next to me. "Psst! Psst! Come here!" he thought I was a prostitute in disguise. Some wore the Islamic dress to hide their identity. [...]

People thought that I belonged to everybody

because my father was not around to protect me. (Faqir, 2014)

From text above, it shows that negative perspectives of this community happen since Najwa has verbal violence from a strange man. Just because she went alone out of house without male figure then men in this environment treats her like she is a harlot that makes her in disadvantaged position. The strength of patriarchal systems in this country causes women have limited access to be in public sphere.

Furthermore, these behaviors are often aligned with unconscious attitudes or implicit association that link targets of stigma with negatives words, images and outcomes (Banaji, 1995); (Greenwald AG, McGhee DE, 1998). It can be seen that in this society that women still need men as their protector, and men can determine women's identity as their desires.

Furthermore, it's not only in Jordan Najwa got rejection by men however she also is underestimated by a man in London. Faqir tells that when she was on the plane to London, she met a British man named Andy. One day, he let Najwa to stay at his house for a while since she asked him for help from dangerous terror from a strange man in her hotel. At last, when she abided at his house, Najwa and Andy had sexual intercourse before married but it happened as they wanted without coercion from each other. But at the end, she is degraded and rejected by Andy as a result of she is a daughter of missing father. As a result, Najwa decided to leave her house and try to find her father.

I stood on the platform, waiting for the train and shifting my weight from one foot to the other. No kiss, hug or a proper goodbye. Why was he so cold with me? My grandmother had said that men were predators. "You must not give yourself on a plate to them before they knock on your front door and ask for your hand in marriage." Was that the way people did things in this country? Did men lose interest in women

after they had slept with them? Or he might not have wanted to get involved with a foreigner. Perhaps he didn't approve of women travelling without an escort. But I went to Afghanistan to look for my father. Could it be my father again. Who would want the daughter of a terrorist? (Faqir, 2014)

From the text above, it implies that Najwa has psychological violence which she has poorly treated from Andy. It proves that a woman who comes from a patriarchal society, inevitably experiences social and psychological alienation in certain periods of her life (Kocsoy, 2010). Moreover, there are some reactions that show his ignorance and humiliation to her. As Faqir told, After Andy got as what he wanted from Najwa in term of sex then he humiliates and leaves her like there is no something happened before between him.

Moreover, in Vicky's (and also Miranda's) statements, the Middle East is knowable to the western subject: women's oppression is so obvious in these parts of the world. Since its dichotomous construction relies on the characterization of western countries as liberated and free. (Schraff, 2011).

As Khan (2005) points out, constructions and comparisons between the west as progressive and liberated and the rest as oppressive and traditional. The Juxtaposition between the west and the rest is frequently coded in terms of gender and the granting of sexual freedoms (McRobbie, 2009); (Pedwell, 2010).

Therefore, this study assumes that this novel contains of gender issues since the novel identifies gender differences had been built by social constructions. In addition, unequal relationship brings out to injustice which is mostly experienced by women. Moreover, negative labelling that occurs in patriarchal society is directly as a cause of various violence acts derived by men against women which it sets harmful position for women but profitable for men.

Unequal roles that occur in this society make women do not understand about their rights in their places. Then, they assume that violence against women is natural things.

However, Moreno, Heise, Jansen, & Watts (2005) stated that there is nothing “natural” or indivertible about men’s violence toward women. The attitudes can and must change; the women’s status can and must be improved; men and women can and must be convinced that violence is not an acceptable part of human relationships.

Eventually, the study discovers that gender relations in *Willow Trees Don’t Weep* novel are divided into three categories. First is a male domination, the male character who dominates female characters’ life is Omar Rahman. Furthermore, male domination only happens in the city of Amman at Jordan because this society considers that men presence is more important than women.

However, different conditions happen in Pakistan and Afghanistan. At these countries, she can be friends with Zakir and Ashraf. The second is discrimination towards woman; this study finds that Najwa is humiliated by society and unable to access public facility as men. And the last category is violence against woman, this study classifies violence experienced by Najwa into three types. First is physical violence, it can be seen by Faqir when Najwa had a sexual harassment from strange man by touching her private part. The second is verbal violence; Najwa is degraded by a man through painful words that he claimed her as prostitute. And the last type is psychological violence, it happens through Andy’s gestures that shows his renunciation to Najwa.

After analyzing this novel, eventually this study presumes that Jordan is the most country with adhering patriarchal systems. Moreover, this novel also contains of feminist values since this study discovers

that there are some efforts conducted by Najwa to get her rights and roles along with an acceptance from men in her society. Moreover, opinion that occurs in this novel through feminist literary criticism approach is Faqir explores about how Jordanian women’s lives based on her experiences, without intends to marginalize women this society. Faqir shows the reader that Najwa and Raneen as traditional women with or without awareness lived in dependency of life as a result of patriarchal system that applied in their society. In addition, by depicting Najwa as courageous and independent woman, Faqir tries to reveal that men and women are same. They have equal position so it is hoped that there is no more gender inequality occur.

#### D. Conclusions

It can be concluded that gender relation in every country is different due to the different viewpoints on their basic principles or cultural systems used in that society. Besides, gender is not a God’s will meanwhile it had been built by social and cultural construction. It can be seen through Faqir’s novel when Najwa appear in different countries such as Afghanistan and Pakistan. In these countries, she is appreciated and honored by men unlike in Amman when she is discriminated by men and society as she has no father who stays with her. Furthermore, gender relations in Faqir’s novel concerning the subordination on woman is exist in some countries including in Jordan, Pakistan, Afghanistan and London. However, as it is depicted on the novel, Jordan has the strongest patriarchal system in which women who live without a male figure in the family should face any kinds of discrimination.

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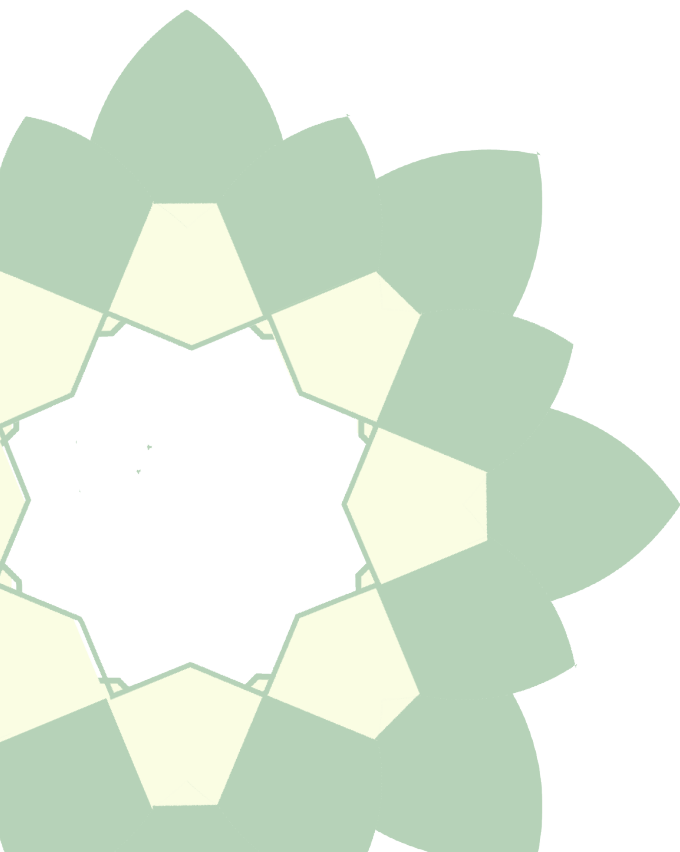
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